

## Reflecting Wall Narrative – By lead artist, Ro Mottsmith

The concept behind the reflecting wall is that we are all connected. The design incorporates natural elements, both to ground us and to evoke the symbolism different cultures associate with birds and other animals. The mirrors are a literal reminder for us to reflect on our experiences, but not in isolation. Threads run throughout the piece, tying the mirrors to each other and to the natural elements surrounding them. Some connections are looser, some are tighter and more direct, some are tangled - representing how each of our actions and experiences are connected to everyone around us. From how we talk to and about each other to if we wear masks to if we put our lives at risk doing our jobs to keep others safe, nothing happens in isolation. Ideas we learned from the long history of disability activism influenced policy that helped everyone, practices we learned from the LGBTQ+ community about harm reduction helped us figure out what kind of risk we were willing to accept, and the leadership of Black activists helped us understand how our society is set up to benefit some at the detriment of others. This piece asks us to reflect on everything we learned and continue to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic, about both ourselves and our communities, and to contemplate where to go from here.